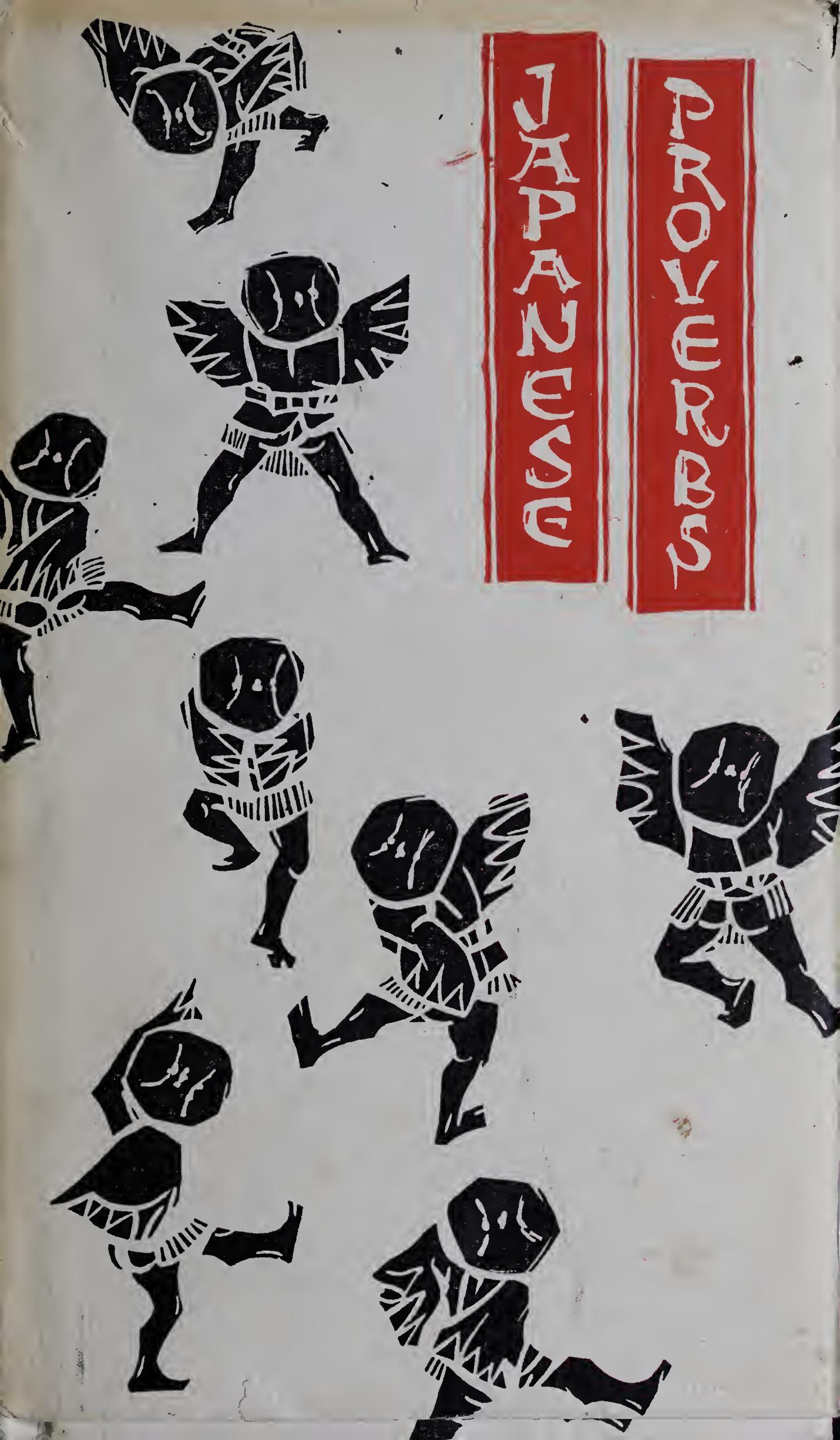


JAPANESE

ADVENTURES



A PETER  
PAUPER  
PRESS  
BOOK

44





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# Japanese Proverbs & traditional phrases

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C O P Y R I G H T

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PETER

PAUPER

P R E S S , I N C .

## N O T E

You can tell a people's character from that people's proverbs. Therefore any friend of the Japanese will know already what he will find here: a sentimentality about flowers and a cynicism about people; a confidence in the eternal and a distrust of the immediate; a seriousness about shrines and a jocularity about priests.

This combination of spirituality and worldliness is not unique to the Japanese, but they show it perhaps more sharply than any other people.

In *any* collection of proverbs you can always find another kind of contradiction: a yes to each no on any question, and a black to every white. This collection is no exception. National traits are not involved by such contradictions: they are simply mirrors of human pessimism and optimism, bad experience and good. We hope your experience here will be all good!

Einser haarspangen  
scrunchies  
Note pad

JAPANESE  
PROVERBS AND  
TRADITIONAL  
PHRASES

• • •

DECORATIONS  
DRAWN BY  
JEFF HILL



PLAN YOUR LIFE  
AT NEW YEAR'S:  
YOUR DAY AT DAWN

OPEN YOUR UMBRELLA  
BEFORE YOU GET WET

YOU CAN'T SIP SOUP  
WITH A KNIFE

SPARE ME YOUR  
SPARROW'S TEARS

A WOMAN'S MIND:  
LIKE SPRING WEATHER

BEAN-PASTE THAT  
SMELLS LIKE BEAN-PASTE  
IS NO GOOD

MAIDENS AND FISH  
DON'T KEEP



HE IS AS GOOD  
AS HE IS WICKED

EVIL COMES FULL CIRCLE  
HOME TO US

THE NEIGHBOR'S BLOSSOMS :  
PINKER

NO ONE SITS STILL  
WHEN THE NEXT HOUSE  
BURNS

THE FIRST STAR  
IS NAMELESS

KINDNESS : NOT FOR OTHERS  
BUT FOR OURSELVES

ONCE UTTERED  
WORDS RUN FASTER  
THAN HORSES



THE GO-PLAYER DOESN'T  
GET TO HIS MOTHER'S  
DEATH-BED ON TIME

HE IS BUILDING A BRIDGE  
OVER THE OCEAN

HE IS ONE INCH GOOD  
ONE FOOT EVIL

A SINGLE POST  
CAN'T HOLD UP  
A SAGGING HOUSE

THE CHILD NEVER CHANGES :  
SOMETIMES FOR  
A HUNDRED YEARS

IF YOU MAKE  
YOURSELF A DOG  
MAKE YOURSELF  
A RICH MAN'S DOG



LUCKY: LIKE HAVING  
A RICE DUMPLING  
FLY INTO YOUR MOUTH

YOU CAN'T QUARREL  
WITHOUT ANOTHER  
QUARRELER

IN WEALTH, MANY FRIENDS:  
IN POVERTY  
NOT EVEN RELATIVES

DON'T GO DOWN  
IN ANOTHER'S FALL

THE HALF-DRUNK MAN  
EXPOSES HIS  
WHOLE NATURE

HE BENDS HIS  
SEVEN-HINGED KNEE  
IN EIGHT PLACES



FIRST WE DRINK THE WINE  
THEN THE WINE  
DRINKS THE WINE  
THEN THE WINE DRINKS US

THE STONE BUDDHA  
WILL SOMETIMES SPEAK

DOG : THROWING DIRT  
WITH YOUR HIND LEGS

HEAVEN CANNOT USE  
TWO SUNS  
OR A HOUSE TWO MASTERS

PRINCIPLE COMES  
BEFORE PARENTS

SICKNESS COMES IN  
AT THE MOUTH :  
AND EVIL  
GOES OUT THERE



EVEN THE PRETTIEST SHOE  
MAKES A SORRY HAT

BIG TREES  
PROVOKE THE PRIDE  
OF WINDS

ONE MADMAN  
MAKES A HUNDRED  
SANE MEN FLEE

IT'S ONLY ONE HAIR  
PULLED FROM NINE COWS

YOU CAN'T STRAIGHTEN  
A SNAKE  
PASSING IT THROUGH  
A BAMBOO TUBE

WHEN HIS MOUTH  
STOPS SHOUTING  
HIS HAND STARTS STRIKING



HOW CAN YOU BEAT A DOG  
THAT LICKS YOUR HAND?

HE IS DRESSED IN RAGS  
BUT HIS HEART  
IS REAL BROCADE

INVALIDS LIVE THE LONGEST

THE BEGGAR'S WORK :  
PURE PROFIT

TO GIVE GROUND  
IS SOMETIMES  
THE BEST VICTORY

THE DEFEATED ONES  
BECOME THE REBELS

DON'T TAKE A GILDED SWORD  
TO CUT A RADISH



COOL AS THE TOAD  
WHO SNAPPED A MOSQUITO

YOU CAN SEE  
ANOTHER'S ARSE  
BUT NOT YOUR OWN

OTHERS ARE OTHERS  
I AM I

NO MEDICINE CURES  
STUPIDITY

EVEN A CUP OF TEA  
HELPS HUNGER FOR A BIT

DON'T TRY TO WASH OUT  
BLOOD WITH BLOOD

NO LORD CAN RULE  
WITHOUT SOMETIMES  
PLAYING DEAF AND BLIND



DON'T JUDGE THE TREE  
TILL YOU SEE THE FRUIT

YOU OVERHEAR SO MUCH  
CORMS WILL GROW  
ON YOUR EARS

YOU CAN KNOW TEN THINGS  
BY LEARNING ONE

NO WORD CAN CUT KINDNESS

HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW  
THE POTATOES HAVE  
BEEN BOILED

IT TAKES ORDINARY MEN  
TO SET OFF GREAT ONES

DON'T ASK A BLIND MAN  
TO SHOW THE WAY



WE ARE LIKE BLIND MEN  
PEEPING THROUGH A FENCE

THE FOOT-CLOG  
AND THE BUDDHA :  
BOTH MADE OF WOOD

THE CLEAREST MIRROR  
CANNOT SHOW THE BACK

DON'T GET SHIPWRECKED  
AS YOU ENTER PORT

DON'T WATCH A BONFIRE  
IN A STRAW COAT

THE NAKED MAN  
NEVER MISLAYS HIS WALLET

WISDOM IS ONE TREASURE  
NO ROBBER CAN TOUCH



BETTER COVER THE FISH  
THAN CHASE THE CAT

EVEN THE WELCOME GUEST  
IS A NUISANCE  
AFTER THREE DAYS

LET WISDOM AND VIRTUE  
BE THE TWO WHEELS  
OF YOUR CART

HE JUDGES BY  
WHAT HE HEARS  
NOT BY WHAT HE SEES

DON'T SET A CAT  
TO GUARD THE MILK

EVEN A DOG WON'T EAT  
QUARRELS BETWEEN  
MAN AND WIFE



TWO WET LOVE-BIRDS  
UNDER ONE UMBRELLA

PAINTERS AND LAWYERS  
CAN SOON CHANGE  
WHITE TO BLACK

DON'T SEEK AFAR  
TO FIND A WIFE

GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWIXT  
MEN AND WOMEN:  
BUT THEY  
GET MIGHTY CLOSE

A CRYING CHILD  
AND A LORD'S AGENT  
GET THEIR WAY

LOVE BLINDS US  
TO OUR SWEETHEART'S  
FAULTS



HE AND SHE ARE SO CLOSE  
NOT EVEN WATER WOULD  
SEEP BETWEEN THEM

YOUR KARMA AND  
YOUR SHADOW  
ARE ALWAYS THERE

BETTER THE WIFE  
OF A DIVORCED MAN  
THAN THE WIFE  
OF A WIDOWER

THE FOOL'S WISDOM COMES  
AFTER HE IS HURT

WILLOW BRANCHES NEVER  
SNAP UNDER THE WEIGHT  
OF SNOW

GREAT VILLAINY IS  
OFTEN CALLED LOYALTY



MEWING CATS  
CATCH NO RATS

DRUMS SPEAK  
ACCORDING AS YOU STRIKE

DON'T FEAR A GREAT ENEMY  
OR DESPISE A SMALL

SPILLED WATER  
NEVER RETURNS TO THE CUP

A QUICK PROMISER  
A QUICK FORGETTER

YOU CAN'T SEE  
THE WHOLE SKY  
THROUGH A BAMBOO TUBE

A BRIDEGROOM FROM  
THE CASTLE  
A BRIDE FROM THE COTTAGE  
MAKE A GOOD MATCH



DON'T LAUGH SO HARD  
YOU DISLOCATE YOUR JAW

EVEN THE ROOFTOP CROW  
IS TOUCHED BY LOVE

WHO DOES NOT THINK  
FAR AHEAD  
WILL HAVE TROUBLES  
NEAR AT HAND

NEAR NEIGHBORS :  
BETTER THAN  
DISTANT COUSINS

ONLY A MONKEY TRIES  
TO CATCH THE FULL MOON  
IN THE POND

THE COUPLE'S QUARREL  
AND THE WEST WIND  
DIE DOWN AT DARK



NO BRANCH IS BETTER  
THAN ITS TRUNK

WATER FAR OFF  
PUTS OUT NO FIRE AT HOME

SPARROWS KNOW NOT  
THE DREAMS OF SWANS

HE IS SPOILED:  
HE PEELS HIS DUMPLINGS

TO LIVE LONG  
KEEP A COOL HEAD  
WARM FEET

PRECAUTIONS MUST  
BE TAKEN FIRST

DON'T BE SO GREEDY  
YOU BREAK YOUR NAILS



AVARICE BIG ENOUGH  
IS CALLED AMBITION

THE FORTUNE-TELLER  
NEVER KNOWS HIS OWN

THERE ARE OLD MEN  
OF THREE;  
CHILDREN OF A HUNDRED

A BAD WIFE  
IS POOR HARVEST  
AFTER SIXTY YEARS  
OF HUSBANDRY

DON'T LUG DIRT  
TO A HILLTOP

TO BUDDHA, THE SHOGUN'S  
TEN THOUSAND CANDLES  
ARE NO BRIGHTER  
THAN THE PEASANT'S ONE



WE DO WELL  
WHAT WE LIKE WELL

THE POOR PILGRIM  
LAUGHS AT HIGHWAYMEN

WHEN THE OIL IS GONE  
THE LAMP GOES OUT

EVEN A THIEF  
TAKES TEN YEARS  
TO LEARN HIS TRADE

BELOW THE HULL  
IS HELL

A THOUSAND DAYS  
IN THE AFTERWORLD:  
BETTER ONE DAY IN THIS

IT IS A JEWELLED CUP  
WITHOUT A BOTTOM



LOVERS' QUARRELS  
RE-DYE LOVE'S COLORS

LATE DRINKING AND  
LATE RISING:  
SHORT CUTS TO POVERTY

OLD MEN FOR WISDOM  
YOUNG MEN FOR WAR

HAPPIER THE EVE  
THAN THE HOLIDAY ITSELF

DON'T PAINT ON WATER  
OR CARVE ON ICE

RICH MAN'S APPETITE:  
NEVER SATISFIED

A SLIP OF THE TONGUE  
CUTS DEEPER THAN  
THE SWORD



GO AWAY AND  
YOU ARE SOON FORGOTTEN

ILL-WON MONEY  
NEVER STICKS

UNPOLISHED GEMS  
DON'T GLITTER

DON'T KILL THE GNAT  
AND LET THE HORNET GO

CHILDREN  
ARE THE POOR MAN'S  
WEALTH

THE LOUD VOICE  
OFTEN WINS THE QUARREL

DON'T CALL IN THE DOCTOR  
AFTER THE FUNERAL



IT IS SIMPLER TO DIE  
THAN TO LIVE

USELESS AS  
A BORROWED CAT

AN ELEGANT WOMAN :  
EYES AND NOSE ON AN EGG

THE NAIL  
THAT RAISES ITS HEAD  
IS HAMMERED DOWN

GRANDMOTHER'S PETS  
MAKE POOR PROVIDERS

BEAUTY IS SILENT  
YET IT SPEAKS TO US

BEING BORN :  
THE BEGINNING OF THE END



HIDDEN AND SILENT  
WORMS RIDDLE THE WOOD

THE WORLD IS DARK  
EVEN HALF AN INCH AHEAD

IT RAINED SO HARD  
THE AXLE WASHED AWAY

LOVE KEPT COVERED  
BURSTS OUT SOMEHOW

MANY PLEADING VOICES  
CAN MELT METAL

THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN  
CAN DESTROY  
SURELY AS THE AXE

PINCH YOURSELF TO KNOW  
HOW IT FEELS TO OTHERS



YOU CAN CHANGE  
YOUR CLOTHES  
NOT YOUR CHARACTER

AN EARTHEN BUDDHA  
HAD BETTER NOT PLAY  
WITH WATER

WHO CAN TELL THE  
HE-CROW FROM HIS MATE?

THE PHEASANT  
WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT  
IF IT DIDN'T CRY OUT

HE WHO MIXES DYE  
TAKES ON ITS COLOR

DON'T PAY FOR THE FUR  
WHILE THE WEASEL'S  
STILL HOLED UP



NO ONE CAN KEEP ONE EYE  
IN BACK OF HIS HEAD

YOUTH CAN GROW OLD  
AND NOT GROW WISE

DON'T GO TO THE FISHPOND  
WITHOUT A NET

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN  
COME TO LEARN MOST GRIEF

HE IS POOR WHO DOES NOT  
OWN CONTENT

IF YOU LOVE YOUR SON  
MAKE HIM LEAVE HOME

VICTIMS OF THE  
SAME DISEASE  
HAVE MUCH TO TALK ABOUT



DRINK POISON:  
YOU MIGHT AS WELL  
CHEW UP THE GLASS TOO

THE MENDED LID  
BELONGS ON  
THE CRACKED POT

HE IS WISE WHO KNOWS  
WHAT IS ENOUGH

WITH MONEY  
EVEN A FOOL'S ORDERS  
ARE OBEYED

EVEN BUDDHA:  
HE GIVES BLESSINGS  
AS WE GIVE HIM COINS

NO MAN IN THE SADDLE  
AND NO HORSE  
UNDER IT EITHER



SET ASIDE  
NEXT DAY'S LUNCH  
WHILE YOU'RE AT SUPPER

IN TIME EVEN YOUTH  
GROWS OLD

BLUE COMES FROM INDIGO  
BUT IS BLUER  
THAN INDIGO

THOUSANDS OF  
SOLDIERS, YES :  
BUT TRY TO FIND  
ONE GENERAL

HOMEMADE BEAN-PASTE  
IS HOT

BIG FISH BETTER NOT SWIM  
IN SHALLOW BAYS

RICH MEN DON'T DIE  
IN THE GUTTER



A ONE-INCH WORM :  
PERHAPS A HALF-INCH SOUL

HE KNOWS MANY THINGS  
BUT NOT MUCH OF ANY

HIS HAND WAS BITTEN  
BY HIS OWN DOG

SNOW ON MY OWN UMBRELLA  
CAN BE BORNE

WHO COMES EARLIEST  
LEADS THE WAY

LOOK UP :  
NO SHAME BEFORE HEAVEN  
LOOK DOWN :  
NO SHAME BEFORE EARTH

HIS BEST HELPER  
IS HIMSELF



DON'T PLUG YOUR EARS  
WHEN YOU GO  
TO STEAL A BELL

HEAVEN HAS NO MOUTH:  
IT MUST SPEAK  
THROUGH MEN

THE WEAKLING  
SHOULDN'T FLAUNT  
HIS JEWELS

SMALLER THE MAN  
BIGGER THE ANGER

POVERTY IS WORSE  
THAN THE FOUR  
HUNDRED DISEASES

THE THOUSAND-MILE  
JOURNEY  
STARTS WITH ONE STEP



THE CROW THAT  
APES THE CORMORANT  
GETS DROWNED

STEAL MONEY  
YOU'RE A THIEF :  
STEAL A COUNTRY  
YOU'RE A KING

TO KILL A GENERAL  
FIRST SHOOT HIS HORSE

WITH TWO  
OF THE SAME TRADE  
WAR IS MADE

EVEN THE ANT'S HOPE  
MAY REACH HEAVEN

SOME POTS HAVE  
LIDS THAT FIT ;  
SOME DO NOT



THE STUBBORN MAN  
INSISTS ON WALKING  
RIGHT UNDER THE WHIP

YESTERDAY'S BLOSSOMS :  
ONLY A MEMORY TODAY

THE LORD IS THE SEA :  
THE SUBJECT  
A FISH THEREIN

HARDER TO FEED  
THE PEOPLE THAN HOLD  
BACK THE FLOOD

THE PURCHASE  
OFTEN PROVES CHEAPER  
THAN THE GIFT

TO HEAR ABOUT IT  
SOUNDS LIKE SILVER COINS ;  
TO SEE IT : COPPERS



KEEP FENCES  
EVEN BETWEEN FRIENDS

A DILIGENT ANT  
UNDERMINES THE MOAT

YOU CAN CATCH A TARPON  
WITH A SHRIMP

WHAT IS LEFT UNSAID  
IS RICH AS FLOWERS

OUR MINDS ARE AS VARIOUS  
AS OUR FACES

TOUGH: AS THOUGH  
HE WERE GIVEN BIRTH  
BY THE CROTCH OF A TREE

OVER-LOVING TURNS TO  
OVER-HATING



STRANGE DOGS DON'T ENTER  
IF THE GATE  
IS REALLY SHUT

IT'S NOT THE DRUGS  
THAT KILL  
IT'S THE DOCTORS

YOU CAN WORK IN DIRT  
AND LEAD A CLEAN LIFE

THE EMPTY LIFE  
IS FILLED WITH TEARS

YOU CAN'T POLISH A TILE  
INTO PRECIOUS STONE

WHAT WE THINK WE HAVE  
BUT HAVE NOT: MONEY

YOUR TONGUE'S SWORD  
CAN CUT SHORT YOUR LIFE



CAREFUL HOW YOU HANDLE  
SCISSORS AND FOOLS

DON'T FASTEN THE HANDLE  
TO THE PAIL-BOTTOM

IF YOU ARE IN A HURRY  
GO ROUND-ABOUT

A PENNY IN HAND  
WORTH A POUND IN HOPE

HE WHO KNOWS TALKS NOT  
HE WHO TALKS KNOWS NOT

TO UNDERSTAND  
A PARENT'S LOVE:  
HAVE A CHILD

SOME PRAY TO THE GODS  
ONLY WHEN IN TROUBLE



THE WHORE'S SINCERITY:  
A FOUR-CORNERED EGG

WHO LIVES BY THE RIVER  
OFTEN DIES BY THE RIVER

THOUGH THE LORD  
MAY UNBEND  
THE SUBJECT SHOULD NOT

THE TALLEST TREES:  
OFT LEVELED BY THE STORM

ADVERSITY  
IS THE SOURCE  
OF STRENGTH

DON'T CARRY CARTS  
TO THE SEA OR  
BOATS TO THE HILLS

LAZY PEOPLE  
HAVE NO SPARE TIME



IF YOU CARRY TREASURE  
DON'T TRAVEL AT NIGHT

BETTER BE IGNORANT  
THAN MISTAUGHT

COFFIN-MAKERS  
LOVE THE PLAGUE

DON'T PUT A CLEAVER  
IN THE CLUTCH OF A MANIAC

WOMEN AND SMALL MEN  
ARE HARD TO HANDLE

NOT THE LOVER  
BUT HIS LANGUAGE  
WINS THE LADY

BETTER SHAVE YOUR MIND  
THAN YOUR SKULL



IF YOU ARE ASLEEP  
YOU CAN'T EAT DUMPLINGS

WISE MEN DO  
NOT BLAME OTHERS;  
BUT THEMSELVES

THE ADDITION IS CORRECT  
BUT WHERE IS THE MONEY?

SUMMER INSECTS  
SEEK THE FLAME

HE'S A GREAT EATER:  
BUT THAT'S HIS ONLY SKILL

OF THE THIRTY-SIX  
WAYS TO FIGHT  
THE BEST IS TO FLEE

EATING SWEETS  
GIVES YOU NO STRENGTH



YOU CAN'T JUDGE  
WIDOWS OR HORSES  
WITHOUT HANDLING THEM

A PRETTY GIRL  
AND A BAG OF COINS  
TAKE WATCHING

IF YOU BELIEVE  
EVERYTHING YOU READ  
BETTER NOT READ

HE IS TOO TOUGH  
TO BE EITHER  
BOILED OR BROILED

THE BIGGEST FISH  
ALWAYS BREAKS THE LINE

IF YOU EAT ONLY  
THREE-QUARTERS FULL  
YOU WON'T NEED A DOCTOR



BETTER PLANT THE PADDY  
THAN WRITE POEMS

IN A QUARREL  
BOTH SIDES SHOULD  
BE PUNISHED

IMPOTENT AS A DRY SARDINE  
GNASHING ITS TEETH

THE DEAD TIGER  
LEAVES HIS PELT :  
MAN HIS REPUTATION

SHE LOOKS SO GENTLE  
SHE WOULDN'T KILL A GNAT

IN THE MOUNTAINS  
WE FORGET  
TO COUNT THE DAYS

WINE TELLS THE TRUTH



DON'T USE THE OX-CLEAVER  
TO KILL A HEN

IF YOU FALL IN THE STREET  
LOOK OUT FOR DUNG

DON'T MAKE A PIN  
INTO A PICKAXE

WHEREVER WE GO  
WE CAN FIND GREEN HILLS

HE'S A PUMPKIN  
PLUS EYES AND NOSE

DON'T ATTACK A TIGER  
WITH A COMPANY OF SHEEP

YOU START DIGGING  
THE WELL  
WHEN YOU ARE THIRSTY



HAVE THREE DAUGHTERS :  
ONE WAY TO STAY POOR

OLD MEN ARE  
CHILDREN TWICE

THE DEFEATED GENERAL  
SHOULD NOT TALK OF WAR

DON 'T CARRY WATER  
IN A WICKER BASKET

THE KIND MAN  
LOVES MOUNTAINS  
THE CLEVER MAN  
LOVES RIVERS

WINE IS THE KING  
OF MEDICINES

TWO HEARTS :  
AND ONLY ONE BODY



WE ARE NO MORE  
THAN CANDLES  
BURNING IN THE WIND

THE PRIEST IS SOMEONE  
INSIDE THE ROBE

BETTER A LIVE BEGGAR  
THAN A DEAD MILLIONAIRE

RUN AFTER TWO HARES  
AND CATCH NONE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TEACH  
THE SEA-SERPENT TO SWIM

WHEN THE BELLY IS FULL  
THE EYELIDS CLOSE

YOU CAN'T DIG CLAMS  
IN A GARDEN



WHEN YOU GROW OLD  
OBEY YOUR CHILDREN

BETTER THE BEAK  
OF THE HEN  
THAN THE TAIL  
OF THE HORSE

HUMAN LIFE:  
IMPERMANENT  
AS MORNING DEW

A BIG ROCK  
HAS TO BE CHIPPED AWAY

IN CHOOSING A WIFE  
LOOK FIRST  
AT HER MOTHER

BREAD IS BETTER  
THAN BLOSSOMS

WHEN YOU SAY CHISEL  
YOU ALSO MEAN MALLET



ONE DOG BARKS AT NOTHING:  
ALL THE DOGS  
BARK WITH HIM

BORROW FROM HIM,  
HE HAS AN ANGEL'S FACE:  
REPAY HIM, A DEVIL'S

THE FELLOW IS SINGING  
ON HIS WAY TO THE GALLOWS

THE OLD FORGET  
THE YOUNG DON'T KNOW

THE GO-BETWEEN  
WEARS OUT  
A THOUSAND SANDALS

WINE IS LUNATIC WATER

AN EXPERT CALLIGRAPHER  
KNOWS HIS BEST BRUSH



YOU CAN'T SNATCH THE CUB  
UNLESS YOU GO  
INTO THE TIGER'S DEN

IT'S A BAD HOUSEHOLD  
WHERE THE HEN  
ANNOUNCES DAWN

OLD PEOPLE TELL  
OLD TALES

NEITHER BURN INCENSE  
NOR BREAK WIND

GOOD MEDICINE HAS OFTEN  
A BITTER SMACK

REPENTANCE  
NEVER COMES FIRST

HE IS A STORK  
AMONG US CHICKENS



WHEN THE DRAGON  
FIGHTS THE TIGER  
BOTH GET HURT

WHO SITS IN THE SHADE  
WON'T TAKE AN AXE  
TO THE TREE

MONEY EVEN BUYS MEN  
OUT OF HELL

DYERS ALWAYS WEAR  
PLAIN WHITE CLOTHES

MONEY IS FRUIT  
OF THE PERSEVERANCE TREE

DON'T CARRY A LANTERN  
IN MOONLIGHT

SWEET WORDS : DISEASES  
HARD WORDS : MEDICINES



MAY YOU LIVE  
TO BE A HUNDRED:  
MAY I LIVE  
TO BE NINETY-NINE

FROGS IN A WELL  
SHOULDN'T SPEAK  
OF THE SEA

DON'T LEND YOUR AXE  
TO GET YOUR OWN  
TREES FELLED

FIRST AMONG BLOSSOMS  
THE CHERRY:  
AMONG MEN  
THE WARRIOR

LEPERS ENVY SYPHILITICS

VICTORIOUS A KING  
DEFEATED A TRAITOR



FALLEN FLOWERS  
CAN'T CLIMB BACK

BETTER THE ARROW  
PIERCE YOUR BREAST  
THAN YOUR BACK

LEAN ON A POST  
NOT ON PEOPLE

AS NATURAL AS WATER  
ON THE FROG'S FACE

TO TEACH  
IS ALSO TO LEARN

THERE IS NO POVERTY  
AMONG BEGGARS

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DIE:  
HEAVEN AND HELL  
ARE IN THIS WORLD TOO



A GOOD WIFE:  
THE FAMILY TREASURE

THREE WOMEN:  
A NOISY CROWD

THIEVES IN EVERY CITY  
RATS IN EVERY HOUSE

YOU CAN'T WRAP  
UP THE WIND OR  
TIE DOWN THE SHADOW

ICE NEVER GETS ON WELL  
WITH BURNING CHARCOAL

DON'T WRESTLE  
WITH A CURTAIN

LOOK AT THE DEVIL  
PRAYING AT THE SHRINE



IF A FANCY LASTS  
THREE YEARS :  
CALL IT LOVE

HONEY IN HIS MOUTH  
HATE IN HIS HEART

THE RICHER THE COUNTRY  
THE SOFTER ITS ARMY

EVERY EXTRA THING  
YOU OWN  
IS EXTRA TROUBLE

WE CAN STAND  
SEVEREST PAIN THREE YEARS  
WHEN SOMEONE ELSE  
IS SUFFERING

A GOOD HORSE NEEDS  
ONLY THE SHADOW  
OF THE WHIP



NO ONE EVER STUMBLED  
LYING SNUG IN BED

A BARKING DOG  
IS NO HUNTER

A PEASANT GIRL  
CAN SOME DAY  
RIDE A GOLD PALANQUIN

YOU CANNOT LIVE  
IN THE SAME WORLD  
WITH YOUR FATHER'S  
MURDERER

SAYING NO  
THE MAIDEN SHAKES  
HER HEAD UP AND DOWN

AN OLD WIFE AND  
AN OLD POT  
ARE THE BEST  
AROUND THE HOUSE



THE FLAME BRIGHTENS  
WHEN ABOUT TO FAIL

A FOOL AT FORTY  
A FOOL FOREVER

TOO LONG FOR A BELT  
TOO SHORT FOR A SASH

NO MAN LASTS MORE  
THAN A LIFETIME:  
HIS FAME MAY LAST FOREVER

PICK YOUR WIFE  
IN THE KITCHEN

YOU MIGHT AS WELL  
GO FISHING  
IN THE TREES

THE BEE THINKS  
TO STING THE OX'S HORN



QUICK AS A CENTIPEDE  
WITH STRAW SANDALS  
ON EACH FOOT

WE CAN SEE SEVEN  
FAULTS IN ANOTHER:  
NOT ONE OF OUR OWN TEN

EGGPLANTS DON'T GROW  
ON MELON VINES

EVEN A STARVING HAWK  
WON'T LOWER HIMSELF  
TO EAT CORN

GET OUT OF THE FOREST  
WHILE YOU STILL  
HAVE DAYLIGHT

OLD FRIENDS AND  
NEW CLOTHES  
BETTER THAN NEW FRIENDS,  
OLD CLOTHES



IF HE WORKS FOR YOU  
YOU WORK FOR HIM

A CROOKED BRANCH  
CASTS A CROOKED SHADOW

ONE FALLING LEAF  
FORETELLS  
DEATH OF A WHOLE YEAR

GOLD IS BRIGHTER EVEN  
THAN BUDDHA'S HEAVEN

FLOWERS SEEM TO  
BLOOM BETTER  
FOR WIDOWS

EVEN WHEN HE FALLS  
HE DOESN'T GET UP  
EMPTY-HANDED

DON'T SCRATCH YOUR SHOE  
WHEN YOUR FOOT ITCHES



DON'T TEST EVERY  
STONE BRIDGE  
WITH YOUR STICK

THE LIFE OF LUXURY  
IS A SHORT ONE

DON'T SETTLE THE QUARREL  
LISTENING TO ONE SIDE ONLY

KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT  
YOUR EYES OPEN

HE FELL SEVEN TIMES  
AND GOT UP EIGHT

THE OPPOSITE SIDE  
HAS ITS OPPOSITE SIDE

OLD HORSES  
DON'T FORGET THE ROAD



LOOK AT A WOMAN  
AT NIGHT,  
FROM AFAR, OR UNDER  
AN UMBRELLA

SOONER OR LATER  
YOU ACT OUT  
WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

DON'T TRY TO GRAFT  
THE BAMBOO  
ONTO THE PINE

NO ILLUSION  
NO ENLIGHTENMENT

DON'T WASTE YOUR PRAYERS  
IN THE HORSE'S EAR

EVEN WITH DEVILS  
WE PREFER THE ONES  
WE'RE USED TO



FOSTER PARENTS:  
MORE GENEROUS EVEN  
THAN YOUR OWN

YOU CAN'T LADLE OUT  
THE SEA WITH A SHELL

ALWAYS CONDEMN  
THE CRIME  
NOT ALWAYS THE CRIMINAL

SOME RIDE IN PALANQUINS  
SOME BEAR PALANQUINS:  
SOME WEAVE SANDALS  
FOR PALANQUIN-BEARERS

DISEASE AND DEATH  
RECOGNIZE NO FACE

SEE NO EVIL  
HEAR NO EVIL  
SPEAK NO EVIL









